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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Communist China-Tibet

SUBJECT Lanchow--Sinkiang Railroad Line

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1. Construction of the Lanchow-Sinkiang railroad line had reached Tibetan autonomous territory at Tienchu by the middle of Aug 1953.. (Tienchu lies 132 kilometers from Lanchow.) Building of the line will continue during the winter of 1953 and 1954, with a crew of 22,000 workmen. The purpose now is to get across the Wuhsi Ling mountain chain. The foothills were reached on 19 Oct 53. It will be necessary to build three tunnels, thirty-five snow sheds, and two big bridges--at a height of 3,000 meters above sea level. The work has to be done with the aid of steam injectors, in order to offset the freezing of the earth.
2. The speeding up of the advance of this railroad is on express instructions of "military advisers" in Peiping.
3. It will be remembered that Tienchu, with its 60,000 people, was made an autonomous district by Peiping, three years ago. The idea of the Red Chinese in creating autonomous districts, is thus gradually to reduce Lhasa's sphere of influence.

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